DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 413 339 TM 027 583

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TITLE Progress Maps. Assessment Resource Kit(ARK).
INSTITUTION Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne.
SPONS AGENCY South Australia Dept. of Education, Employment and Training, Adelaide. Children's Services Office.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-86431-205-9
PUB DATE 1996-00-00
NOTE 58p.; Booklet is part of an Assessment Resource Kit available from the Australian Council for Educational Research. For related documents, see TM 027 581-586.
AVAILABLE FROM Australian Council for Educational Research, 19 Prospect Hill Road, private bag 55, Camberwell, Victoria 3124, Australia; telephone: 03-9277-5656; fax: 03-9277-5678; international telephone: 61-3-9277-5656; international fax: 61-3-9277-5678 ($12.95 Australian dollars).
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Benchmarking; *Educational Assessment; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Observation; *Performance Based Assessment; *Student Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS *Australia (South Australia); Developmental Assessment; Monitoring; *Progress Mapping

ABSTRACT

A progress map describes the nature of development in an area of learning and thus serves as a frame of reference for monitoring individual growth. An essential feature of a progress map, which is an integral component of Developmental Assessment, is that it describes and illustrates developing competence. The first step in constructing a progress map is to specify the kinds of skills, knowledge, and understandings that make up a domain of learning and to draw on expert knowledge and research evidence to develop a draft of the sequence in which these learning outcomes typically develop. Once a progress map has been drafted, the resulting draft must be checked against student achievement. The checking process usually leads to a revised map. Observations of student performance on assigned tasks provide opportunities to refine descriptions of progress through an area of learning, and this enriching process continues through each assessment task and beyond. A progress map describes typical student progress through an area of learning, but by itself it does not answer questions about the adequacy of student achievement. Comparative benchmarks may be set by reference to performances in other places or by other people, while absolute benchmarks may be set by identifying desirable levels of student performance for particular purposes. Examples of progress maps and benchmarks are given and highlighted in a number of illustrations. (Author/SLD)

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